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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 NDJAMENA 000556

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

STATE FOR AF/C
STATE ALSO FOR S/USSES
STATE ALSO FOR PRM/AFR
NSC FOR GAVIN
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LONDON FOR POL - LORD
PARIS FOR POL - BAIN AND KANEDA
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SUBJECT: CHAD HUMANITARIAN UPDATE, 16 - 22 NOV 2009

REF: N'DJAMENA 542

11. (U) The following is an update of N'Djamena RefCoord's activities for the period of 16 - 22 NOV 2009.

12. (U) In this edition:

(SBU) IRC SEEKS TO RE-STRUCTURE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR OURE CASSONI
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(SBU) UNHCR TO BRIEF DONORS ON 2010 PLANNING
(SBU) IFRC: BEST CASE FOR 2010 - "TRANSITION YEAR"; WORST CASE - "CHAOS"
(SBU) IOM SENIOR OPERATIONS OFFICER ARRIVES
(SBU) CALENDAR

IRC SEEKS TO RE-STRUCTURE
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR
OURE CASSONI

13. (SBU) International Rescue Committee (IRC) Chad Country Director briefed RefCoord 16 November on negotiations with UNHCR-Chad over IRC's 2010 activities in the Oure Cassoni refugee camp in northern Chad. In the wake of IRC-Chad's long-running dispute with UNHCR over the proper handling of protection case information, IRC reports the NGO has been asked to maintain its activities in Oure Cassoni in providing primary health, education, and water/sanitation services. The Country Director stated that UNHCR-Chad intends to provide all protection services through additional UNHCR-Chad staff, both assigned to Oure Cassoni as well as covering the camp regionally from the more heavily-staffed Iriba sub-office that will begin operations at the new year. In addition, UNHCR-Chad has suggested that IRC's role in camp management, which the NGO has undertaken from the camp's inception, should be turned over to the GoC's National Commission for the Welcome and Reinsertion of Refugees (Commission Nationale d'Accueil et de Reinsertion des Refugis -- "CNAR"). IRC estimates that PRM funding for protection activities in its more than \$2.4 million cooperative agreement with the NGO amounts to some \$600,000. The Country Director speculated that IRC could increase its education, youth, and vocational training programs for the duration of the cooperative agreement (through July 2010, as well as continue some community services not tied to case management.

UN HUMANITARIAN AIR SERVICE
IN THE BLACK AGAIN

14. (SBU) World Food Program (WFP) staff of the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) briefed users and donors 19 November on the UNHAS financial position at the end of 2009, and operations plans for 2010. The air service had started 2009 with a projected budget of some \$16.6 million. Donor contributions were insufficient throughout the first eight months of the year, leaving the service over \$1 million in deficit by mid-August and without operating funds for the rest of the year. UNHAS implemented cost-cutting measures to bring total expenditures for 2009 down to an estimated \$12.7 million; emergency contributions from the European Commission Humanitarian Aid office (ECHO), PRM, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Sweden brought total resources to \$15.7 million, covering operating costs through the end of 2009 and up through roughly March 2010, based on a new operations plan just approved at WFP headquarters (provided by email to PRM and OFDA).

15. (SBU) UNHAS projects budgetary requirements for 2010 at \$11.4 million, considered sufficient to continue operations with a more efficient aircraft mix including a 37-passenger Dash 8 brought into service in October to good user reviews (greater cargo capacity, sufficient range for new direct flights from N'Djamena to deep field locations bypassing Abeche). RefCoord suggested that, while the leaner budget and efficient aircraft mix were very positive developments, it appeared that UNHAS had not been listening to users who had been seeking greater access to the southern areas of Doha and Haraze, currently only served by the NGO Air Serv International.

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ECHO also stressed the need to build service to these locations into the operations plan; the representative of Aviation Sans Frontiers (ASF) reminded the group that plans had been underway to extend the runway at the southern town of Doba to accommodate the shifting of UNHCR offices in the south from Gor to Doba, as well as to build a new airstrip at Doha through an income-generating activity for the refugees in the area, but discussions had tapered off without conclusion. (NOTE: RefCoord learned later that UNHCR intends to begin serving Haraze airstrip with a 19-passenger Beechcraft B-1900D aircraft that, although part of the UNHAS fleet, is wholly funded from UNHCR and currently used for twice-weekly flights between N'Djamena, Moundou, and Sahr in the south. UNHAS seemed unaware of UNHCR's intentions, and UNHCR representatives at the users group meeting did not mention it.)

16. (SBU) WFP-Chad staff stressed the need for donors to provide the greatest possible contributions "up front", which would allow UNHAS to negotiate longer-term leases on aircraft at reduced costs. RefCoord emphasized the difficulty of organizing such a financial response based only on a few indicative slides, and pleaded for clear, disaggregated budgetary projections to accompany funding requests, so that decisions on contributions could be made based on complete information. The ECHO representative lamented the continued unwillingness of the GoC to allow UNHAS to implement a cost-recovery system for financing. The WFP-Chad Country Director stated his readiness to re-open negotiations, but stressed that the GoC at the working level were clear that any system allowing UNHAS to charge passengers for flights would change the air service's status to that of a commercial enterprise, resulting in a significant increase in landing and other operating fees. He stated that changing this attitude would likely require political intervention at the highest levels of the Chadian authorities, and even then there would be no guarantee of success. Finally, the user group agreed that there was insufficient humanitarian need to justify restoration of the cancelled weekly flights from N'Djamena to Yaounde, Cameroon, but asked UNHAS to work up a cost estimate of implementing two round-trip flights on consecutive weekends once per quarter.

UNHCR TO BRIEF DONORS ON
2010 PLANNING

17. (SBU) RefCoord met 19 November with the UNHCR-Chad Deputy Country Representative, and the Principal Program Administrator, at RefCoord's request for what was to be a camp-by-camp and partner-by-partner explanation of how UNHCR-Chad saw activities going forward in 2010. Discussion instead focused on "FOCUS" -- the results-based management software now in use to carry out planning and budgeting for operationalizing the Global Needs Assessment. UNHCR-Chad colleagues admitted that Chad-based planning had been chaotic in the last several weeks, complicated by the implementation of UNHCR-Chad's structural reorganization -- still not finalized -- and the constant rotation in and out of Chad of senior staff for their 10-day R&R breaks every six to eight weeks. UNHCR-Chad agreed that communication with donors and partners had been absent from the field as the team in-country crashed on implementing the new planning processes at the end of October and early November. The Program Administrator said he was confident that the 1-day workshop given to NGO representatives the week of 09 November on the way in which they should present funding proposals had been effective; RefCoord noted that NGO partners had reported that they had nearly finalized proposals for 2010 under the old system, in collaboration with UNHCR-Chad field staff, when they were told they would have to start over with a results-based approach.

18. (SBU) UNHCR-Chad colleagues agreed to RefCoord's proposal that they owed a full briefing and written explanations to donors on (a) the final shape of the staff reorganization, including an organizational chart, setting out the expected impact the new structure would have on operations; (b) the results framework coming out of the Chad-based 2010 planning process; (c) UNHCR-Chad's priority activities which they expected to fund out of their budget; (d) prioritized gaps requiring direct donor intervention; (e) UNHCR-Chad's intentions regarding greater Chadian national engagement and camp self-reliance; and (f) UNHCR's activities

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regarding the movement of Oure Cassoni camp. The briefing is scheduled for 25 November.

IFRC: BEST CASE FOR 2010 --
"TRANSITION YEAR"; WORST CASE --
"CHAOS"

19. (SBU) RefCoord met with International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Chad Country Representative on 21 November to discuss IFRC and Chadian Red Cross (Croix-Rouge Tchadienne -- CRT) operations in the Bredjing and Treguine camps around Farchana. The Country Representative noted that he had pulled all international IFRC delegates out of their Hadjer Hadid office for security reasons, given that the IFRC were committed to operating without armed escorts, and the security conditions in the Farchana area were extremely uncertain. The organization and their CRT partners had already lost two vehicles to criminals in recent weeks. He characterized the CRT's camp management role in Bredjing and Treguine, in collaboration with IFRC, as uncertain, believing that UNHCR-Chad sought to turn this over to the CNAR. He was also under the impression that UNHCR-Chad preferred a national NGO, the International Health Support Center (Centre de Support en Sante Internationale /Tchad -- "CSSI"), to take over primary health services. However, he was unsure about these possible measures, having not had any direct word from senior UNHCR-Chad representatives. He believed he would hear something in the coming week.

110. (SBU) The IFRC Country Representative expressed the view that, in the best case scenario, IFRC and the international NGOs that would continue to work in the camps would be able to help the Chadian entities build capacity over the coming year to allow them to take on greater responsibilities in hosting Chad's refugee and IDP populations. He feared, however, that the worsening security environment would limit the mentoring opportunities; that Chadian entities would in no way be immune from attack, and so would be greatly challenged to fulfill their new roles by both lack of

capacity and the danger of the context; that a possible lack of consistent services would cause resentment and disruption in the camps themselves; and that the tendency seen in the past for Chadian partners to divert project resources from their designated uses could create significant difficulties.

IOM SENIOR OPERATIONS
OFFICER ARRIVES

¶11. (SBU) RefCoord met 22 NOV with the newly arrived Senior Operations Officer for the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The OpsOfficer, an American Citizen, has been assigned to Chad on a TDY basis through February 2010, coming from his recent post managing the Overseas Processing Entity for Iraq out of Amman, Jordan. He expressed the hope that his assignment might become permanent as IOM moves forward to organize its presence in Chad. Reftel noted the need for a skilled OpsOfficer to relieve the pressure on an understaffed IOM operation in Chad, as well as the requirement for IOM to establish itself as an accredited international organization with the GoC. The current acting Chief of IOM Mission informed RefCoord that, although an MOU accrediting IOM in Chad is ready and approved within the GoC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), IOM has been unable to both get on the Minister's calendar for a signing ceremony, and to organize the visit of an appropriately-qualified IOM official for the event.

¶12. (SBU) Regarding the subject of the secure movement of hundreds of refugees between far-flung camps across eastern Chad, the new OpsOfficer expressed real concern about the idea of organizing such movements in a Phase IV security environment, noting that it is one thing to do so in Iraq, with the help of 130,000 American troops, and quite another in Chad. RefCoord spent much of the meeting briefing on the operational realities, including Post's request to revise the Travel Warning for American Citizens in eastern Chad. The OpsOfficer wondered whether there has been any thought, in PRM, UNHCR, or IOM, as to how one "pulls the plug" on such a P-2

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resettlement scheme if tensions rise and turn to violence, perhaps driven by the eventual roll-out of a public information campaign to sensitize the affected refugee populations as to the structure of the resettlement plan.

CALENDAR

¶13. (SBU) RefCoord Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) travel has been delayed by security concerns in the Farchana area; the absence of key partner staff in the Iriba area; and cancellation of UNHAS flights due to the holidays surrounding the Muslim celebration of Aid-al-Adha, and the Chadian government's marking of the Proclamation of the Republic (28 NOV) and "Freedom and Democracy Day" (01 DEC).

07-11 DEC (TBC) Proposed M&E Travel to Iriba
19 DEC-02 JAN RefCoord Annual Leave

NIGRO